

The First In, First Out Rule

The First In, First Out (FIFO) rule is essential for businesses responsible for the serving of food. Frequent deliveries and large numbers of staff can create confusion about when certain items were received. This system allows kitchen staff to minimise food spoilage and avoid serving out of date food which may place patrons at risk of food poisoning.



The First In, First Out rule refers to labelling all foodstuffs with the stored dates and then first utilising the oldest products by storing them in accessible locations.



Develop a practical labelling system

When implementing the FIFO rule, the first step is to develop a labelling system that helps kitchen staff quickly identify which foodstuffs, including ingredients and cooked meals, are to be used first. An example of a system that may be useful is the application of **receiving labels** that clearly outline the date the product entered the kitchen.



Ensure the storage of products allows for ease of access

While labels can be effective, the second step in the FIFO process is to create a storage process that allows for stock rotation. Whether this is in the cupboard, refrigerator or freezer, there is no sense in labelling new stock and positioning it at the front of the area. Ensure to train staff to efficiently rotate stock immediately upon delivery.



Utilise products that align with the FIFO principles

Once the kitchen is organised and the FIFO rule put in place, it is essential to support this process using food safety products that align with its principles. Items such as **FIFO squeeze bottles** allow for quick refilling and guarantee that the older product is used first.



Discard out-of-date products

The FIFO rule helps to quickly identify products that are out-of-date. It is essential to regularly check all stock across the cupboards, refrigerator or freezer and dispose of any expired items or those that appear to have deteriorated in condition.



Maintain effectiveness with consistent training

It is important that new staff members joining the kitchen team are taught about the FIFO rule early to avoid confusion and place the business at risk of waste or food contamination. Developing a comprehensive training program will ensure that food safety remains a top priority at all times.